

## The Advanced Placement Program at St. Pius X High School

*Consistent with its mission as a college preparatory school, St. Pius X High School offers a number of Advanced Placement courses to its students. An established, nationally recognized program, Advanced Placement courses are available to students who are willing to undertake more complex, challenging course work. The foundation for the skills and knowledge a student must master to succeed in an Advanced Placement course is laid in the college-prep program beginning in the St. Pius X student's freshman year and built upon in each succeeding year. In general, superior performance in appropriate college-preparatory courses suggests readiness for Advanced Placement work. While Advanced Placement courses often emphasize a broad range of topics to study, St. Pius' Advanced Placement teachers may emphasize additional topics and skills students need to succeed at the college level.*

### The Expectations & Challenges of Advanced Placement for St. Pius X High School Students

St. Pius X High School is committed to the education of the whole person, and the school works with students and parents to balance students' academic, spiritual, and co-curricular demands so that they can ably manage the challenges of high-school life. All students who meet the graduation requirements of St. Pius X High School are prepared for college coursework. AP courses are very rigorous, and they accelerate students' preparation for college. Each AP course poses its own distinct challenges, and as a result departments have identified specific guidelines and indicators to assist faculty, administrators, students, and parents in determining whether a student is prepared for the challenges of an AP course. These guidelines may include minimum grade point averages, course prerequisites, placement examinations, portfolios of student work, and teacher recommendations.

While St. Pius X High School encourages students to challenge themselves academically, we also counsel prudence in course selection so that academic challenges are beneficial and not detrimental to student development. Once admitted to an AP course, a St. Pius X student must be committed to completing the course and any preparatory summer work. Students will not be dropped from an AP course roster without the approval of the Administration. St. Pius requires that students enrolled in an AP course will take the culminating AP exams. In cases when the school is concerned a student is overextending himself/ or herself by taking an AP course, parents and students may be asked to agree in writing that the student and parents understand the challenges of AP coursework and that the student will complete the course.

### Interpretation of Individual & School-Wide AP Exam Performance

In addition to achieving the St. Pius X High School learning outcomes, a key goal for Advanced Placement students is performing successfully on the Advanced Placement exams. St. Pius X High School recognizes that students who successfully complete AP courses and the subsequent AP exams may derive a benefit in gaining admission to the colleges and universities of their choice. While St. Pius X High School is proud of the success of its students on AP exams, "pass rates" alone do not indicate instructional excellence. More significant is the high number of St. Pius X High School students willing and able to take on the educational challenge of AP courses.

### The Effect of AP Courses on Grade-Point Averages

St. Pius X High School students' grade-point averages, as published on student transcripts, are weighted. Students' grades in Advanced Placement & Honors courses at St. Pius X High School do carry an additional grade point value, which is used for academic honors and recognition. It is important to note that colleges and universities determine for themselves how much added value an AP course should carry during their admissions process.